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THE THUNDERING MARCH OF PROGRESS

Today, as everyone knows, is the forty-sixth anniversary of the founding of Grunmire College for Women, which, as everyone knows, was the first Progressive Education college in the United States.

Well do I recollect the tizzy in the academic world when Grunmire opened its portals! What a buzz there was, what a brouhaha in faculty common room, what a rattling of teacups, when Dr. Agnes Thadd Sigafoos, first president of Grunmire, lifted her learned old head and announced defiantly, "We will teach the student, not the course. There will be no marks, no exams, no requirements. This, by George, is Progressive Education!"

Well sir, forward-looking maidens all over the country cast off their fetters and came rushing to New Hampshire to enroll at Grunmire. Here they found freedom. They broadened their vistas. They lengthened their horizons. They unstopped their bottled personalities. They roamed the campus in togas, leading sardots on leashes.

And, of course, they smoked Marlboro cigarettes. (I say, "Of course." Why do I say, "Of course"? I say, "Of course" because it is a matter of course that anyone in search of freedom should naturally turn to Marlboro, for Marlboro is the smoke that sets the spirit soaring, that unyokes the captive soul, that fills the air with the murmur of wings. If you think flavor went out when filters came in—try Marlboro. They are sold in soft pack or flip-top box wherever freedom rings.)

But all was not Marlboro and oestrin for the girls of Grunmire. There was work and study too—not in the ordinary sense, to be sure, for there were no formal classes. Instead there was a broad approach to enlarging each girl's potentials, both mental and physical.

Take, for example, the course called B.M.S. (Basic Motor Skills). B.M.S. was divided into L.D. (Lying Down), S.U. (Standing Up) and W. (Walking). Once the student had mastered L.D. and S.U., she was taught to W—but not just to W, any old way! No, sir! She was taught to W with poise, dignity, bearing! To inculcate a sense of balance in the girl, she began her exercises by walking with a suitcase in each hand. One girl, Mary Ellen Dorgenfeld, got so good at it that today she is bell captain at the Dunbar-Hilton Hotel in Columbus, Ohio.)

When the girls had walking under their belts, they were allowed to dance. Again no formality was imposed. They were simply told to fling themselves about in any way their impulses dictated, and, believe you me, it was quite an impressive sight to see them go hounding into the woods with their togas flying. (Several later joined the U.S. Forestry Service.)

There was also a lot of finger painting and sculpture with mud hunkers and like that, and soon the fresh wind of Progressivism came whistling out of Grunmire to blow the ancient dust of pedantry off curricula everywhere, and today, thanks to the pioneers at Grunmire, we are all free.

If you are ever in New Hampshire, be sure to visit the Grunmire campus. It is now a lunnery.

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If you like mildness but you don't like filters—try Marlboro's sister cigarette, Philip Morris. If you like television but you don't like garbage—try Max Shulman's "The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis" every Tuesday night on CBS.

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